

Message Text

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43

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 /065 W

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R 031329Z OCT 75

FM AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5487

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, KE, UK

SUBJECT: KENYA GOVERNMENT REGISTERS DISPLEASURE WITH BRITISH
PRESS

REF: NAIROBI 7634

1. KENYA GOVERNMENT HAS RECENTLY TAANQ TWO STEPS TO
TRANSLATE ITS IRE OVER LONDON SUNDAY TIMES ARTICLES
(REFTTEL) INTO CONCRETE ACTIONS. AS REPORTED BY LONDON
CORRESPONDENT OF NAIROBI STANDARD (BUT NOT BY OFFICIAL
KENYA NEWS AGENCY), KENYA HIGH COMMISSION IN LONDON DE-
LIVERED AIDE-MEMOIRE TO FCO IN LATE SEPTEMBER WARNING
THAT "SMEAR CAMPAIGN" AFFECTED UK-KENYA RELATIONS AND
COULD JEOPARDIZE BRITISH ECONOMIC INTERESTS IN KENYA.
AIDE-MEMOIRE REPORTEDLY ASSERTED THAT BRITISH GOVERN-
MENT COULD CURBIPRESS EXCESSES IF IT WISHED.

2. MINISTRY OF INFORMATION EARLIER THIS WEEK OFFICIALLY
REQUESTED REUTERS TO WITHDRAW ITS NAIROBI CORRESPONDENT.
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REUTERS HAS DISCUSSED ISSUE WITH MINISTRY BY TELEPHONE

FROM LONDON AND HAS APPARENTLY SUCCEEDED IN DEFERRING WITHDRAWAL UNTIL MATTER CAN BE DISCUSSED FURTHER WITH GOK. ALTHOUGH REUTERS MAN ACCUSED OF FALSE REPORTING, FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT COMMUNITY BELIEVE THERE IS NO BASIS FOR THIS CHARGE AND THAT REUTERS IS SURROGATE TARGET OF OFFICIAL DISPLEASURE BECAUSE TIMES OF LONDON CORRESPONDENT HAS BEEN ON LEAVE AND APPARENTLY WILL NOT BE BASED IN NAIROBI IN FUTURE.

3. COMMENT: SEVERAL KENYANS IN PRIVATE CONVERSATIONS HAVE INDICATED TO US THAT THEY SUSPECT BRITISH OFFICIALS PROVIDED PART OF MATERIAL IN SUNDAY TIMES SERIES, ALTHOUGH WE STRONGLY DOUBT THIS IS THE CASE. ALTERNATIVELY, AND MORE PLAUSIBLY, KENYANS THINK BRITISH GOVERNMENT PREVAILED ON TIMES TO DELAY PUBLICATION OF SERIES UNTIL UK HAD SUCCESSFULLY ENLISTED KENYATTA'S INTERVENTION WITH AMIN ON BEHALF DENNIS HILLS. UPON REFLECTION, KENYATTA FELT HE HAD BEEN "USED" AND PROTEST MAY HAVE BEEN AT HIS INITIATIVE. UK HIGH COMMISSION SOURCE POINTS OUT THAT ITS DELIVERY COINCIDED WITH PRIVATE VISIT TO LONDON OF NJOROGE MUNGAI, JBOMER FOREIGN MINISTER AND CLOSE ASSOCIATE OF KENYATTA. MARSHALL

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